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ABSTRACT

This personalized Activity Kit (PAK) deals with the procedures for selecting and organizing a representative school-community committee. Ways of analyzing the community are examined to provide a basis for the choice of the committee members. After completing this unit, the participant should have the skill necessary to select and organize a representative committee for his particular community. Appendixes contain facilitator guidelines and sample worksheets. (Author/IPT)

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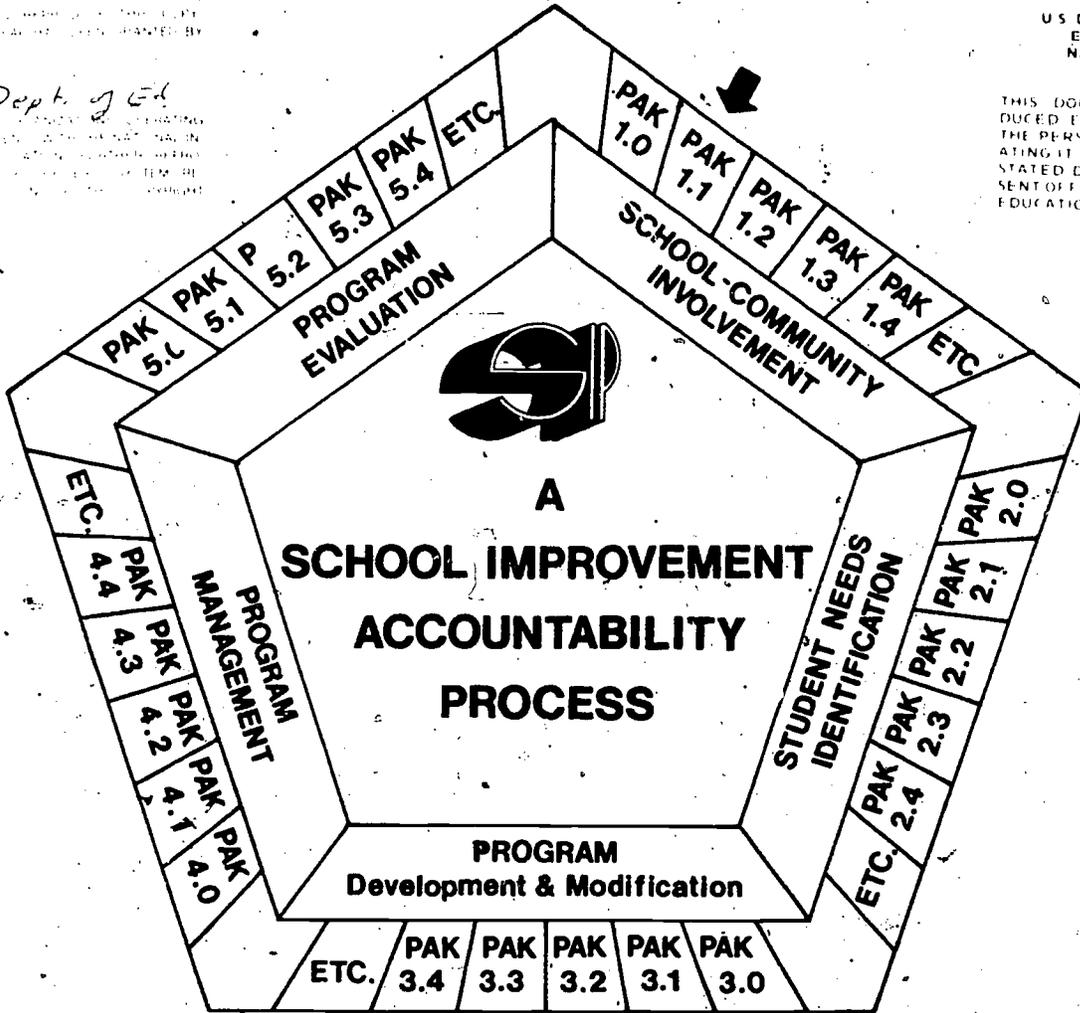
# A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS KIT

## PAK #1.1 - FORMING A REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,  
EDUCATION & WELFARE  
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Personalized Activity Kit (PAK) for use as:

- Individualized Study Guide
- Small Group Study Guide
- Workshop Facilitator's Guide

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EA 009 717

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A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS KIT

PAK #1.1 - FORMING A REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

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Denver, Colorado  
July 1975

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This PAK was written in 1973 by members of the District  
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## DIRECTIONS FOR THE USE OF THE PAK

Each PAK is designed to be used in three alternative ways: 1) an individual user can work through the packet on his own; 2) a small group may work cooperatively; or, 3) a group of participants may be involved in a workshop situation under the leadership of a facilitator. Experience indicates that the latter is the most desirable situation. While an individual may work through the materials on his own, he misses those shared experiences which come as learners interact in a group situation.

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### PLEASE NOTE

*Because this PAK will be used by many people in your district, please mark only the worksheets supplied by your instructor. Do not mark the pages of this PAK. Sample transparencies and worksheets (for duplication) are included in Appendices A and B.*

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If you are using PAK materials in a group workshop situation, consult Appendix A for detailed instructions. The diagram on the cover page and diagrams for Appendix A may be used to make overhead transparencies.

If you are working through the PAK individually, follow the general directions listed below:

- Read content of the PAK.
- Refer to Appendix A, page 2, for additional instructions.
- Do the exercises on worksheets copies from Appendix B. (when included)
- Read the bibliography (when included):

# DEGREES OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

Information Received from Community

Information Acted Upon by Staff

	STAGE I	STAGE II	STAGE III	STAGE IV	STAGE V
→	School-Community Involvement	Student Needs Identification	Program Development Modification	Program Management	Program Evaluation
↑	C O M M U N I T Y			S T A F F	
↑	I N V O L V E M E N T			I N V O L V E M E N T	
↑	Goals Identified	Program and Interpreted	Program Designed/ Modified	Program Planned and Managed	Results Reported

← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ← ←

RESULTS REPORTED BY STAFF TO THE COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY RESPONSE

## FORMING A REPRESENTATIVE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Purpose

This PAK deals with the procedures for selecting a representative school-community committee. Ways of analyzing the community are examined to provide a basis for the choice of the committee members. After completing this unit the participant should have the skills necessary to select a representative committee for his particular community.

Degrees of School-Community Involvement in a School Improvement Process

The School Improvement Process calls for extensive community involvement during Stages I and II when the school's educational program is interpreted, the educational problems are determined, and educational goals are identified. Later, during Stages III, IV, and V, community involvement decreases somewhat as the school's program is modified, managed, and the results reported. Then, during the final phase of program evaluation, community involvement is intensified once more and the entire process starts over again. (See page 1)

A school improvement committee can serve many purposes. The major functions of such a group -- students, staff, parents, concerned citizens -- should be to:

- (1) gather the community's concerns about its schools;
  - (2) determine the current educational problems;
  - (3) identify the necessary objectives to be met;
  - (4) review progress made by school staff members in achieving these objectives and resolving the educational problems;
- and
- (5) examine the evidence by which the strengths and weaknesses of programs may be determined.

A single school-community committee may be formed and given all of the above responsibilities, or several committees may be formed and given only one or more of these assignments.

It must be emphasized that the functions of school improvement committee members will necessarily differ from those of a school board. Some of these differences are as follows:

School-Community Committee

1. Is appointed by the school board.
2. Is primarily a cross-section of the interest groups of the community.
3. Is an advisory group.

School Board

1. Is elected by the public.
2. Is primarily a cross-section of the geographic divisions of the community.
3. Is, by law, a decision-making group.

The differences in the functions of the two groups derive from the fact that while the committee serves to advise the school board, the school board by law makes the final decisions. Committee members should be advised that their recommendations will be used whenever possible, subject to the approval of the school board.

It is especially important that committee members understand that they are performing a vital service and believe that their contributions will be seriously considered. Both committee members and members of the professional staff should realize that neither will be given veto power over the other's recommendations. Only the local board of education has this power.

## STRUCTURING A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

The first step is for the school board to analyze the makeup of the community in order to identify its various groups. "Community" in this context is defined as meaning all those individuals within the geographic boundaries of a particular school attendance area or school district who will be affected by the educational processes taking place within that community.

This definition is suggested for use as the basis upon which your committee is selected. For your convenience, listed below are some possible distinguishing criteria for membership on your committee:

1. Citizens at large
  - a. parents of school age children
  - b. representatives of community businesses, services, religious and cultural organizations
  - c. representatives of school affiliated organizations
  - d. representatives from ethnic and socio-economic groups
  - e. representatives from governmental organizations
  - f. taxpayers who have no children in school
2. Citizens directly involved in the educational process
  - a. school board members
  - b. administrative staff
  - c. classroom teachers and other certificated personnel
  - d. classified personnel
3. Students

The initial step (in this instance, selection of a representative community committee) is the indicator of how successfully the subsequent procedures will be implemented. The educational leaders in a community know best the composition of the community and its general attitudes toward its institutions of public education. (Educational Goals and Objectives, A Model for Community and Professional Involvement. Produced by Program Development Center of Northern California, Dr. B. Keith Rose, Director.)

To insure that all segments of the community are included for consideration in forming the committee, it is recommended that an estimate be made of the percentage of the entire community included in each group. This estimate needs only to be approximate since it is to be used simply as an indication of the relative proportion each group should receive in the final selection of committee members. To keep the size of the committee functional, one person may need to represent a number of groups. Certainly those most

immediately affected by these educational decisions should be involved in the planning. Therefore, it is of vital importance that a school-community committee include representatives from the student body and the school staff.

Turn to Appendix B, Worksheet #1, pages B-2 - B-6. Look it over. Get separate worksheets from your facilitator and complete this exercise. Work individually and share your results with your group members.

The next step is for the school board to resolve the following important questions:

1. How large should the committee be for optimum representation and effective functioning?
2. Should each group in the community be represented on the committee regardless of group size, or should there be proportionate representation?
3. What is the specific geographic area to be represented by the committee members?
4. Is it important that the committee member reside within this geographic area?
5. By what means can you assure the continuous involvement of students, school staff, and other community representatives in the committee's efforts?

Each of the questions above must be resolved or at least considered prior to the final selection of the committee members. Structuring a committee is complex. Sometimes compromises must be made to accommodate two or more conflicting aims and points of view.

It is generally helpful to include some members on the committee who represent different points of view. Diversity of interest or opinion may be more important than strict proportional representation.

While it is anticipated that committee members will channel the feelings of groups critical of the present education system, it is also important that these committee members be open to new ideas and capable of constructive action.

Turn to Appendix B, Worksheet #2, page B-7, and look it over. Get separate worksheets from your facilitator and complete this exercise. Work individually and share your results with your group members.

After the local school board has analyzed its community and established criteria for selection of committee members, a procedure for nominating people should be developed and widely disseminated. One example of a form useful in nominating people for the committee is in Appendix B, page B-8. Note the criteria used on this form. These may or may not be appropriate for your community. Selection criteria should be unique to the individual community.

In Appendix B, page B-9, is a sample finished product which resulted from the process you have just completed. For obvious reasons, only pertinent, non-provocative information is printed for committee use and public information.

## FIRST STEPS IN ORGANIZING THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

Once the school board has selected the committee members and they have agreed to serve, the board should send an official notification of selection to each member. It is a good idea to send a copy of the list to the local newspaper and other mass media available. Included in the notice should be stated a date, time and place for a joint meeting of the committee and the school board.

The agenda for this first meeting should include an orientation session on the School Improvement Process. It is most important that both groups understand their roles and relationships so that future problems can be avoided. It is recommended that a charge for the committee be developed by the school board. This charge will detail what the committee is to do in terms of specific tasks. If there are certain areas such as staff evaluation that the school board does not want the committee to study, then these limitations should be stated in the charge. Conversely, those areas to be studied by the committee should also be stated. Any questions, concerns, or differences of opinion about the charge should be resolved by the board and the committee at this time. Provision should be made for regular progress reports to the school board. A sample charge to a school improvement committee follows:

SAMPLE CHARGE

TO: Members of the School Improvement Committee  
 FROM: The District Board of Education  
 SUBJECT: The Charge to the District School Improvement Committee  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Education of School District \_\_\_\_\_ is pleased to have the School Improvement Committee working for the continued improvement of education for our boys and girls.

Members of the Board of Education pledge their support and cooperation to the School Improvement Committee as it examines our local Educational program and makes recommendations for educational improvement.

The following conditions shall prevail and guide the work of the School Improvement Committee.

The School Improvement Committee:

shall be advisory to the Board of Education;

shall serve a three-year term with one-third of the committee appointed annually;

shall select sub-committees made up of representative students, professional staff, parents, and other concerned citizens to carry out specific assignments;

shall appoint its own chairman from its membership;

shall appoint a secretary from its membership whose duties shall be that of keeping minutes of all meetings and recording all major or significant motions, decisions, or committee action;

shall select a member of the administrative staff or Board of Education who shall serve as the official liaison for the district;

shall establish a schedule of meetings and general rules for its operation to be filed with the Board of Education;

shall publicize all meetings at least 24 hours in advance with meetings open to the public;

shall clear all press releases and reports with the Board of Education;

shall review all reports or recommendations with the Board of Education;

shall file, with the Board of Education, a work plan for the following school year by \_\_\_\_\_ (date) \_\_\_\_\_;

shall file an annual report and recommendations with the local Board of Education by \_\_\_\_\_ of each year on the progress achieved in the local school district during the previous school year;

shall periodically hold joint meetings with the local Board of Education and review and update the charge to the School Improvement Committee.

(SAMPLE CHARGE, continued)

TASKS DELEGATED TO THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE:

- (1) plan and coordinate Student Needs Identification in the school district;
- (2) submit priority list of student needs to the school board;
- (3) serve as a "sounding board" for new ideas, materials, and concepts;
- (4) review and recommend revisions in school district policies and philosophies based on a Student Needs Identification;
- (5) conduct periodic gathering of community concerns about the educational program;
- (6) review, revise and recommend district goal statements;
- (7) develop a plan to disseminate information about the schools to the public;
- (8) carry out public information responsibilities assigned to the committee;
- (9) identify the characteristics of "quality education" as they pertain to the local district;
- (10) review the results of program evaluation(s) in order to determine whether local level decisions affecting educational processes are advancing or impeding progress of public education in the local district.

TASKS DELEGATED TO THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF:

- (1) development of learner, staff and program objectives;
- (2) selection of educational processes and materials;
- (3) evaluation of student progress;
- (4) appraisal of professional staff performance;
- (5) evaluation of educational programs with feedback to the committee.

Those responsibilities not delegated by the school board to the committee or to the professional staff are reserved to the board.

Further Services and Responsibilities of the Board and the Professional Staff to the Committee:

The school board and the local finance officer should allocate funds for use by the school improvement committee. The committee will need such items as clerical help, postage, stationery, telephone expenses, and possibly, outside consultant help.

Those districts experiencing the greatest degree of success in implementing the School Improvement Process have assigned a professional staff member on either a full or part-time basis (depending upon the size of the school district) to expedite the work of the committee. This coordinator serves as the person to acquire resources necessary for the successful operation of the committee. He is not the chairman, nor does he do the work. His job is to help the committee do its work. He plans inservice training programs for committee members, professional staff, and students. He must be an expert in concerns analysis so that he can help the committee develop a work plan for conducting a Student Needs Identification and do the concerns analysis. He serves as a "linker" between the committee and the school staff, the committee and the students, and the school staff and the students.

It is important that the committee members do not get "bogged down" or "burned out" doing all of the work themselves. One approach which has proven to be successful is the formation of sub-committees by the steering committee. Suggested sub-committees are a professional staff steering committee and a student steering committee. Further, as a variety of specific tasks are identified, temporary sub-committees may be formed to accomplish them. The local coordinator helps these sub-committees plan and carry out work assignments vital to the success of the main school improvement committee whose primary functions are planning, delegating, coordinating, reviewing progress, reacting to sub-committee reports and educational plans, keeping the community regularly informed and continuously gathering community concerns to determine if needs are being met and/or new concerns are emerging.

## -SUMMARY PAK #1.1

During each stage of the School Improvement Process there are varying degrees of community involvement. Extensive community involvement is required during Stages I and II when it is necessary to reach agreement on plans developed to meet student needs. The school improvement committee is responsible for keeping the school board and the community informed and to continue to gather concerns.

Extensive school staff involvement is required in Stages III and IV. During the Program Evaluation, Stage V, the committee reviews the evaluation report and plans ways to inform the community.

School improvement committees should not be asked to play the same role as the school board. They should be given assurance that their recommendations will receive serious consideration. It must be remembered that the final decision rests with the school board.

To avoid conflict between a committee and the school staff it is extremely important to develop a relationship of open communication and cooperative action during all stages of the process.

Prior to organizing a school improvement committee, a careful examination of groups in the community should be conducted. Various social, economic and ethnic groups in the community should be identified, as well as other groups unique to that community. Students and professional staff should be included as members on the committee. Using this community analysis, a deliberate effort should be made to secure reasonably adequate representation of the various interests to be served. Other factors such as differing points of view and personal characteristics of the candidate should also be considered in making the final selection of persons to serve on the committee.

Structuring a representative committee from all sectors (area, grouping, points of view) is a complex task. Those assigned the responsibility of choosing the committee members may have to make compromises in order to accommodate conflicting aims and opinions.

Once the committee is appointed and the School Improvement Process is explained to them, the school board should give them an official charge. A professional coordinator should be assigned responsibility for helping the committee. The school district should budget for committee expenses.

## SELECTED REFERENCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Ayars, Albert L., Administering the People's Schools, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1957.
2. Biddle, William W., The Community Development Process; The Rediscovery of Local Initiative, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965.
3. Colorado Department of Education, A School Improvement Process: Accreditation By Contract, Denver, Colorado, October 1971.
4. Lewin, Kurt, "Group Decision and Social Change," in Theodore M. Newcomb, and Eugene L. Hartley (eds.) Readings in Social Psychology, New York: Holt, 1947.
5. Olsen, Edward G., The School and Community Reader: Education in Perspective, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963.
6. School Improvement Process Team, School Improvement Process Workshop: School-Community Involvement, Denver: Colorado Department of Education, 1972.
7. Warren, Roland L., Studying Your Community, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1955.
8. Worldwide Education and Research Institute, Conducting a Community Analysis, Salt Lake City, Utah: Worldwide Education and Research Institute, 1969.

## APPENDIX A

### FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR GROUPS

Each PAK has been organized around a fundamental and widely recognized generalization of how people learn. Learning occurs more efficiently when an overview is presented first. Succeeding learning experiences then take the person deeper into each concept adding more specific details. There may be several levels of exposure until real expertise is developed.

#### Workshop Specifications

- |                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| I. Time Required:                | Two hours   |
| II. Facilities:                  | One room for each 24 participants. Participants to be seated at tables (maximum of six per table). Rooms should provide adequate accoustics and physical comfort suitable for a workshop session.                           |
| III. Equipment & Material Needs: | One overhead projector and viewing screen per room<br>Power extension cord (1. per room)<br>Transparency sheets<br>Grease pencils<br>Butcher paper<br>Masking tape<br>Chalkboard, chalk, eraser<br>Name tags (if necessary) |

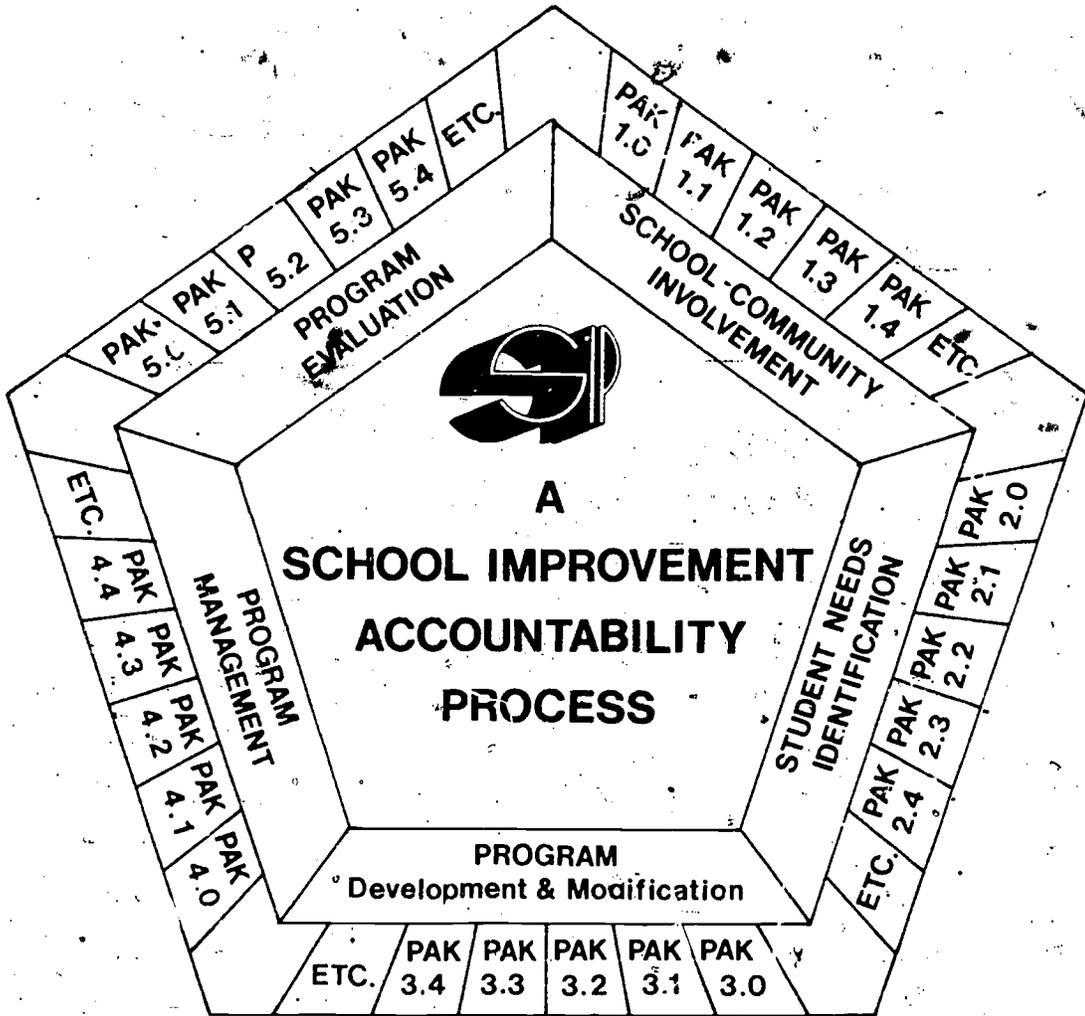
Workshop Activities for PAK #1.1

The following sequence of activities is suggested and may be modified at your discretion.

1. 20 min. Have participants read materials on pages 1 to box on page 5.
2. 25 min. Have participants complete Worksheet #1, (Appendix B), pages B-1 - B-6. Share results with group.
3. 20 min. Resume reading where you left off and read until you come to the directions for Worksheet #2. Encourage discussion and answer questions.
4. 25 min. Complete Worksheet #2 (Appendix B-7). Emphasize that the important requirement is to decide on appropriate selection criteria.
5. 15 min. Conduct a summary session where each group shares the criteria chosen.
6. 5 min. Read pages 6 - 10.
7. 10 min. Call attention to the Summary, page 11. Remind the participants to complete the PAK critique form and turn it in to you.

*NOTE: As quickly as possible, review the critique forms for feedback information that may be helpful during other workshops.*

Total time; Approximately 2 hours.



Please do not mark this worksheet. Use the worksheet provided by your instructor.

- A. In order to be assured that true community involvement and representation has been achieved in the selection of the school improvement committee, it may be helpful to develop a "community profile." Through an analysis of this profile, a representative selection of committee members may be made.
- B. Please read the following instructions for this exercise.
1. Working individually, examine the sample "community profile," pages B-2 - B-5.
  2. In the Individual Selection Column, I, on the following exercise sheets, check (✓) those major categories (A-F) which you believe must be considered in determining membership for your committee. (In selecting those groups from which to draw your membership, consider carefully the sub-groups listed within some of the categories.) Then, fill in the requested information for those categories you checked by estimating answers and/or by using the sources of information listed on page B-6 of this appendix.
  3. When you have written in your individual selections, share responses with group members and reach consensus. Fill in final group selections in Column II.



F. Religious Affiliations (%):

\_\_\_\_\_ Catholic      \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish      \_\_\_\_\_ Protestant  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other

G. Political Affiliations (%):

\_\_\_\_\_ Democratic      \_\_\_\_\_ Republican      \_\_\_\_\_ Independent

\_\_\_\_\_ % of qualified voters who are registered

\_\_\_\_\_ % of registered voters who participated in last municipal election

H. Mobility:

(specify % or number)

How long does the average family stay in your school district? \_\_\_\_\_

I. Geographic Setting:

Location \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

J. Demographic Data:

\_\_\_\_\_ Population Size      \_\_\_\_\_ Population Density      \_\_\_\_\_ Marriage & Divorce Rate

\_\_\_\_\_ Birth & Death Rate

Age Distribution:

\_\_\_\_\_ 0 - 10      \_\_\_\_\_ 10 - 20      \_\_\_\_\_ 20 - 30

\_\_\_\_\_ 30 - 40      \_\_\_\_\_ 40 - 50      \_\_\_\_\_ 50 - 60

\_\_\_\_\_ 60 - 70      \_\_\_\_\_ 70 +

K. Racial Composition of the School District (%)

     American Indian         Asian American         Black  
     Spanish Surnamed American         Other Caucasian

L. Language Composition (%) :

	<u>Language Spoken in Home</u>	<u>Only Fluent Language Spoken by Child</u>
English	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Spanish	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
French	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Japanese	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
Chinese	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>

M. Types of Residents (%) :

     Home Owners         Home Renters         Apartments  
     Mobile Homes         Other

N. Major Organizations in the School District (names) :

O. Socio-Economic Description (%) :

     Upper-Upper         Upper         Upper-Middle  
     Lower-Middle         Lower         Lower-Lower

B-4.

P. Pupil Information:

	I	II
	7	

Approx. #  
per year

Approx. %  
per year

1. Drop-out Rate  
 For District  
 For School  
 (specified)  
 For Grade Level  
 (specified)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Average Daily Attendance  
 For District  
 For School  
 (specified)  
 For Grade Level  
 (specified)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Q. Number of Classroom Teachers:  
 (by grade)

(Elem.)      (Secondary)

Number of Special Teachers:

_____	_____
-------	-------

Number of Paraprofessionals:

_____	_____
-------	-------

R. Number of Students by Grade (K-12):

S. Other:

_____
_____

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Bureau of the Census Publications

write to: Colorado Division of Planning  
524 Social Services Building  
1575 Sherman Street  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Telephone Directory

- ° Yellow Pages
- ° Street Directory

State Documents

- ° Annual Report of Property  
Taxation
- ° Elementary & Secondary  
Education Act

PAK #1.1 - WORKSHEET #2: Group Selection Guidelines

*(Participants decide upon and fill in relevant information used to screen the candidates)*

Criterion #1    Criterion #2    Criterion #3    Criterion #4    Criterion #5    Criterion #6    Criterion #7

Criterion #1	Criterion #2	Criterion #3	Criterion #4	Criterion #5	Criterion #6	Criterion #7

B-7

NOMINATION FORM FOR  
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	SEX		GROUP	RACE						GEOGRAPHIC							
		Male	Female		American Indian	Asian American	Black	Spanish Surnamed American	Other Caucasian	North	East	West	South	Central				



## EXAMPLE OF A PUBLISHED ROSTER OF MEMBERS SELECTED FOR A SPECIAL COMMITTEE

NAME	POSITION	COMMUNITY
Cochine Ratlift	Child Welfare & Attend. Worker	San Jose
Sarah Jackson	Teacher	Fremont
Phyllis Zqissig	Teacher	Fremont
Alicia Castro	Teacher	San Jose
Marie Simbra	Instr. Aide	Fremont
John Mazzone	Principal	Fremont
Mary Gallardo	Parent	San Jose
E. Gallardo	Parent	San Jose
Marilyn Groat	Parent	Fremont
Sister Ann Garcia	Principal	Newark
Bonnie Sidentoff	Non-parent Citizen	Fremont
Virginia Aubrey	Student	Fremont
Michael Fregoso	Student	Fremont
Rudy Aguirre	Student	San Jose
Sister Frances Marie	Principal	San Jose
Gail Law	Prom. Reading Consultant	San Jose
Phil Brazil	Asst. Superintendent	Fremont

PAK # \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please fill in number)

PAK CRITIQUE FORM

Please give your assessment and comments on the following:

PROGRAM ELEMENT	OUT- STANDING	VERY GOOD	FAIR	POOR	VERY POOR	COMMENTS
1. The quality & relevance of the subject matter.						
2. The appropriateness and usefulness of the instructional materials.						
3. The timing or sequencing of the various items presented.						
4. The directing and assistance given on the exercise.						

Other comments or suggestions for improving this PAK:

If this PAK was used as part of a WORKSHOP training session, then please also complete the following:

PROGRAM ELEMENT	OUT- STANDING	VERY GOOD	FAIR	POOR	VERY POOR	COMMENTS
5. The deployment, grouping or planned interaction of the participants.						
6. The productivity and/or usefulness of the individual work session(s).						
7. The comments or assistance given to you on your selected problem.						